

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Decagon Devices

Washington Manufacturing Services

Decagon Devices Creates Culture of Continuous Improvement Thanks to Work of Washington Manufacturing Services

Client Profile:

Decagon Devices, located in Pullman, Washington, is a manufacturer of water and soil measuring devices. The company has been in business for over 20 years and currently employ 50 people.

Situation:

Decagon Devices is a leader in the water and soil measurement devices industry. They manufacture devices for three industry sectors - food, agriculture research and commercial agriculture - and about one-half of their business is international. They are an industry leader with few competitors that is continually looking to grow their business and maintain the high quality of their products. After attending a Principles of Lean Manufacturing class presented by Washington Manufacturing Services (WMS), a NIST MEP network affiliate, Decagon Devices thought that Lean could help them with their long and short-term goals and contacted WMS for assistance.

Solution:

Washington Manufacturing Services brought in Karl Webber of Emergent Technologies (and former project manager with WMS) to do value stream mapping and several Kaizen events. The goals were to address quality, create cells in certain areas, decrease lead time in the repair department and control inventory.

Results:

- * Increased quality in the stenciling area from 35 percent to 95 percent by changing from hand stenciling to machine stenciling.
- * Maintained finished goods inventory levels while increasing sales by 50 percent.
- * Reduced turns in the repair department from 120 days to 10 days.
- * Created cells in several areas that have increased productivity.

Testimonial:

"The Lean initiative that has been undertaken with the help of Washington Manufacturing Services can be measured by more than the quantifiable results. There has been a culture change within Decagon, and continuous improvement is now ingrained in the company culture."

Kirby Dailey, General Manager